

Remarks

Applicants' attorney discussed U.S. Patent No. 5,220,132 to Macey with respect to claims 1 and 9 with Examiner Brinson in a telephone interview on November 9, 2005. No agreement was reached as a result of the telephone interview.

By this Amendment, claims 5, 7, 8, 13 and 15-18 are amended, claims 1 and 9 are canceled, and all other claims are unchanged. Claims 2-8 and 10-18 are pending in the present application.

The Office action indicates that claims 2-4, 6-8, 10-12 and 14 are allowed and that claims 1, 5, 9, 13 and 15-18 are rejected. In a telephone interview with Applicants' attorney on January 18, 2006, Examiner Brinson stated that claim 7 should have been rejected while claim 8 should have been objected to for depending from a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if re-written in independent form.

Applicants traverse the rejections of claims 1, 5, 7, 9, 13 and 15-18. These claims have been canceled or amended to facilitate prosecution. Applicants reserve the right to pursue these claims in a continuing application.

Claim 8 has been re-written in independent form incorporating all of the limitations of the claim as previously presented, and therefore should be allowed. Dependent claims 5 and 7 have been amended to depend from allowed claim 2, dependent claims 13, 15 and 16 have been amended to depend from allowed claim 10, and dependent claims 17 and 18 have been amended to depend from allowed claim 6. Thus, claims 5, 7, 13, and 15-18 also should be allowed.

Accordingly, the present application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. If any further issues remain concerning this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned to discuss such matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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